

No. 20

Chapman

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disertation on  
Diarrhoea or Leucorrh.

C. Purnell

admitted March 13. 1819



Thesis  
Vol. 2

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C. P. Smith

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## Diarrhoea or Loosenss.

Cullen makes this disease to consist in an evacuation by stool more frequent and of more liquid matter than usual. This leading and characteristic symptom is so diversified in its degree, in its causes, and in the variety of matter evacuated that it is almost impossible to give any general history of the disease.

So closely is this complaint allied to dysentery in many of its symptoms that we may readily confound the two diseases. But nosologists have endeavoured to distinguish them by alleging that Diarrhoea is never contagious, is unattended by fever, has evacuations though not perfectly natural, yet much more so than in dysentery, - and is accompanied by less tormina and tenesmus. - All this is true as a general rule: But take the most aggravated form of Diarrhoea and the mildest attack of dysentery and we shall find them so much alike in all the leading characteristics as hardly to be distinguished by the most accurate observation.

Diarrhoea is defined a morbid increase of

Classification of Diseases

Yellow fever may be considered as  
an infectious disease, more properly  
an infectious miasm than a virus. This disease  
and characteristic symptoms is a disease  
in its origin, in its course and in its  
of matter connected that it is almost impossible  
to give any general history of the disease.  
It is classed in the complaint called to dysentery  
in many of its symptoms that are very  
differs from the two diseases that are  
have been considered to distinguish them by  
that that disease is more contagious, is  
attended by fever, has a more insidious  
perfectly natural, yet much more to than in  
repeatedly, and is accompanied by life threatening  
and sometimes. The time is true as a general  
rule: that both the acute ague and  
dysentery and the insidious attack of  
and we shall find them to much of the  
the leading characteristics as ready to be  
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disease is defined a miasmatic disease.

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peristaltic motion. But it may be produced by so many causes, and is so various according to the difference of these causes, that it is almost impossible to speak definitely of the subject.

It is sufficient for our purpose to divide the disease into Idiopathic and Symptomatic.

The first may be induced by causes acting directly on the stomach; or by impressions made on the alimentary canal through the medium of the general system. Of the former causes of diarrhoea the most common are, certain ingesta, which produce their effect either by their quality or quantity; and among the latter causes are checked perspiration, vehement passions, excessive fatigue, and certain diseases, as dentition, retrocedent gout, rheumatism, fever, &c.

In diarrhoea each discharge is preceded by a murmuring noise, and flatulence in the intestines, together with a sense of weight and uneasiness in the lower part of the belly, which cease on the discharge taking place; but are again renewed before the one, which is to succeed, ensues. As the disease advances the stomach becomes affected, and sickness, nausea and vomiting occasionally prevail: the countenance turns pale, and

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the skin is dry and rigid. If the disease continue for any length of time, universal emaciation, dropsy of the lower extremities, and relaxation of every part ensues, together with a great loss of strength.

In forming our prognosis in this disease we are to determine by the particular cause from which it arises; whether symptomatic of another disorder and whether of a critical nature; as likewise by the degree of debility present in the system and the length of time it has continued.

Dissections of persons who have died of idiopathic Diarrhoea have shown ulceration of some portion of the intestines is the morbid state most usually met with; in which case the inner membrane is often abraded to a considerable extent, and its muscular coat made bare. Dissections have likewise shown that the most frequent seat of such ulceration are the follicular glands, and that these now and then become cancerous and assume the same appearance as scirrhus and cancer in other parts.

When Diarrhoea has been symptomatic the morbid changes of these organs belong to the primary disease of which the Diarrhoea is merely a symptom.



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Treatment: In the treatment of Diarrhoea two leading indications always present themselves: The first is to remove the morbid cause; the second is to check intestinal action by allaying irritation and imparting tone to the bowels.

Persuaded that the purging is sometimes induced by something irritating or offensive applied to the alimentary canal, I believe that an emetic is often indicated under such circumstance: after its operation is over a dose of rhubarb may be given with advantage: But should any fever exist, as often happens, it would be proper to resort to venesection; and this to be succeeded by some diaphoretic medicine of which opium should always constitute the basis. Exactly the same plan of treatment is adapted to the complaint arising from other causes; except when it can be traced to checked perspiration: In this last case evacuations from the alimentary canal are not always sufficient: we should endeavour to restore the surface to its natural condition; and for this purpose the warm bath or some diaphoretic, as the *Spiritus mindereri*, effervescent draughts, will be eminently beneficial. This and other recent cases

treatment. In the treatment of diarrhoea the  
 leading indication is always to remove the cause;  
 this is to remove the morbid cause; the aim  
 is to check intestinal action by allaying irrita-  
 tion and restoring tone to the bowels.  
 Provided that the purging is sometimes in-  
 duced by something irritating or offensive applied  
 to the alimentary canal. I believe that an  
 irritant is often introduced under such circum-  
 stances; after the operation is over a mass of  
 hard mucus is given with advantage; but  
 should any fever exist as often happens, it  
 would be proper to resort to venesection; and  
 this to be succeeded by some astringent wash  
 of which opium should always constitute the  
 basis. Generally the same plan of treatment is  
 adapted to the complaint arising from other  
 causes, except when it can be traced to checked  
 hæmorrhages: In this last case evacuation from  
 the alimentary canal are not always sufficient;  
 the blood sometimes has to reach the surface to  
 its natural position; and for this purpose the  
 lower part of some astringent, as the spiritus  
 cinchonicus effusus or tincture, will be in-  
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of diarrhoea are simple in their nature and not difficult of cure.

A different treatment is demanded in chronic diarrhoea of long standing and more or less connected with a diseased condition of some one of the chylipoietic viscera. Here our inquiries must be directed to the state of the system. No matter from what cause the disease may have proceeded if there is a tense and ~~cardiac~~ pulse, as is most commonly the case, we should not hesitate to resort to the lancet. The propriety of venesection in this case is attested by the ample experience of its good effects and is completely established by the appearances of inflammation discovered by dissection: nor will a single bleeding however copious always answer in the case before us. Chronic complaints though not so dangerous have a firmer possession of the parts which they occupy than the more recent, and to dislodge & subdue them is proportionably more difficult. We should not be disappointed therefore if no striking effects follow the first bleeding in chronic cases of diarrhoea: But we should go on repeating it every day or two as long as the condition of the





pulse and strength of the patient will admit of the practice; and we shall hardly fail to be satisfied with the result. Nor is this practice confined to a few: on the contrary it is pursued by the best practitioners of this city. We should recollect however, that copious venesection is altogether inadmissible. The blood should be drawn often and in small quantity at a time.

As a part of the same plan of treatment Emetics of Ipecac: two or three times a week. These do not act principally as evacnants, (though as such they are of advantage,) but by producing a set of new actions they break down the morbid associations, and renovate the condition of the whole alimentary canal.

After such impressions as we desire have been made by the cautious use of venesection, and emetics of Ipecac:, then a combination of rhubarb, Ipecac:, Soporium may be given with advantage; and at night on going to bed ten grains of dovers powder should be taken and its operation promoted by warm beverages.

Much advantage may be derived from the habitual use of the warm bath; but to obtain

and the principle of the practice will not  
 out of the practice; and in these kindly  
 fail to be satisfied with the result. The  
 is the practice confined to a few, or the con-  
 dition it is founded by the best practitioners of  
 this city. The theory is correct however, that a  
 patient's recovery is a matter of time, and in the  
 the blood should be drawn often and in small  
 quantities at a time.  
 A part of the same plan of treatment may  
 be of service: but in this time must be  
 to not act hastily as a general principle  
 is that they are of advantage, but by far  
 passing a lot of new actions that will soon  
 the number of operations, and towards the end  
 of the whole administration must  
 after such confusion as we have known  
 are made by the cautious use of necessary  
 and suitable of blood; then a combination of  
 blood, blood, blood, blood may be given with  
 advantage, and at night or going to bed the  
 use of blood purifier should be taken with  
 caution, provided by some beverage.  
 which advantage may be derived from the  
 rational use of the various diets; but to

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its full effect something stimulating should be added to the water, as mustard, salt, or cayenne pepper: a bath of brine is highly recommended; when used it should be employed everyday, and generally, just before going to bed; after the patient have entered his bed he should be rubbed all over with a flesh brush till a glow is diffused over the whole body.

The remedies already mentioned having proved inefficient we are next to have recourse to some preparation of Alum. This medicine is exceedingly valuable in Diarrhoea and is particularly well suited to the state of the Disease now under consideration. It is decidedly tonic to the bowels and may be administered so as to prove moderately laxative. Three or four grains combined with half a grain of opium may be given three or four times a day: In some cases a small portion of Speacac may be added with utility, especially if the surface of the body is dry, or the bowels are harassed with griping or other uneasiness. A combination of alum and white vitriol is much extolled by Mosely in the treatment of Diarrhoea, (and denominated by him the Vitriolic solution). It is made thus:



Take of White vitriol ℥iij  
rock alum ℥j  
cochineal ℥ss  
boiling water ℔j.

Mix these together in a marble mortar, until the solution is cold, and when the sediment is deposited, pour it off clear for use. The alum may be increased or diminished according to circumstances: that is, when much evacuation is required it is necessary to lessen the quantity of alum and increase that of the white vitriol, & vice versa. The Dose is from a teaspoonful to ℥ss every six hours. Sometimes it may be necessary to give the alum & white vitriol in equal quantities. In inveterate cases, the remedy should be continued for weeks or even months. In Doses of a Table spoonful it generally occasions vomiting and purging on its first exhibition. If vomiting be required it will be advantageous to employ chamomile tea along with the vitriolic solution. If the medicine occasions much nausea (a small Degree of which is intended and will prove useful) the Dose must be diminished. If it produce griping or purging after it has been used for a little while, it will

Take of White vitriol 3ij  
 rectified oil 3j  
 Distill in a bath of  
 Mary 24.  
 The residue is left in a water bath until  
 the solution is cold, pour upon the residue  
 a pint of water, stir it off clear for use. The above may  
 be increased or diminished according to circum-  
 stances. That is, when much evaporation is requir-  
 ed it is necessary to pour the quantity of water  
 and increase that of the white vitriol, vice ver-  
 sa. The use is for a leucorrhoea to 3j every  
 day. Hence, sometimes it may be necessary to  
 give the above 4 white vitriol in equal parts  
 with 4 rectified oil, the remedy should  
 be continued for such a time as  
 that of a little strength it generally occasions  
 vomiting and purging in the first exhibition.  
 If vomiting be required it will be necessary  
 to supply chamberlaine tea along with the  
 white vitriol. If the medicine occasions much  
 nausea, a small cup of which is intended  
 and will prove useful. The dose must be 3j  
 divided. If it produce purging or burning of  
 the rectum, it will

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be proper to counteract these effects by the addition of a small quantity of opium. There is no necessity of any particular regimen; the patient may eat his usual meals, and at the usual times.

Such is Morels's account of his remedy. I cannot say a great deal respecting it from my own personal experience. The principal objection to its employment is its exceedingly nauseating and unpleasant effects on the stomach. Few persons will employ it for a long time, even in the small est doses. It is little employed in this city, or in the country. But formerly it was much more used, and was a favourite remedy with the late Professor Barton who was enthusiastic in its praise, preferring it to all other articles in chronic diarrhoea. That it is eminently tonic might be inferred from the known qualities of its constituents, and from the testimony of the most respectable practitioners who have employed it. Nevertheless it should be remarked that it is extremely disagreeable & it is with considerable reluctance that patients can be prevailed on to take it.

It remains to say something of blisters as a remedy in diarrhoea. The united testimony of all practitioners is entirely in their favour. They may





be applied to either of the extremities; and it has been said by Ricord that their efficacy is augmented by their alternate application, first to the ankles and then to the wrists. They act on the principle of revulsion, or by withdrawing disease from the centre to the circumference. They do good also by breaking down the confirmed associations on which Diarrhoea and other chronic Diseases principally Depend. To obtain their full effect they should be continued for weeks. The surface of the body and that of the intestines are antagonising powers; and by creating irritation on the skin we may often do away those Diseases of the alimentary canal which are accompanied by, or depend on any irritation in that part.

Of the several forms of Idiopathic Diarrhoea it now only remains for me to treat of that which depends on debility or relaxation of the alimentary canal.

This is often met with in the final stage of inflammatory Diarrhoea above described; tho' more commonly it occurs as a primary affection of the bowels among people who from extreme old age or other causes are very much

he applies to either of the physicians; and it has  
 been said by them that their office is not  
 limited by their address of application, first to  
 the mother, and then to the child. They act  
 on the principle of removing or by withdrawal  
 ing disease from the mother to the child.  
 When they are put also by drawing over the  
 conjunctive operation in which disease and  
 the disease disease is principally kept to  
 their their first effect that should be continued  
 in itself. The surface of the body and that of  
 the interior are not progressing forward, and by  
 creating irritation in the skin we may be  
 to remove these diseases of the alimentary canal  
 which are accompanied by a rapid or  
 any irritation in that part.  
 Of the various forms of the disease there  
 there is now only remains for me to treat of  
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 of the alimentary canal.  
 This is often met with in the form of  
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The indication of cure is exceedingly simple and points directly to the restoration of tone to the stomach and bowels. For this purpose the whole catalogue of tonics and astringents has been run through in the treatment of the case.

Among the best of these remedies is undoubtedly the galls alone or in various states of combination. The Gum Kino is also highly recommended. As an astringent to the bowels, in this form of Diarrhoea much has been said of logwood. It has been considerably employed by the practitioners of this city. It is administered in strong decoction in the dose of a table spoonful every hour. As a mere astringent it is indeed very powerful and is exceedingly efficacious in this form of Diarrhoea. But our own country supplies us with several important articles of this class. The first which I shall mention is the *geranium maculatum*. The root is the part selected and is generally prepared by being boiled in milk. I have no experience myself with the article, but from the testimony of others I am induced to believe that much attention is due to it in the treatment of Diarrhoea arising from

associated and inferior  
the association of time is especially suitable  
and points directly to the relation of time to  
the eternal and divine. For this purpose the  
whole catalogue of time and substances has  
been seen through in the treatment of the case  
showing the best of their relation to each other  
and the gods alone in various states of con-  
struction. The prime time is also highly re-  
sponsible. It is independent to the point  
in this form of substance which has been that  
of substance. It has been consistently employed  
by the practitioners of this city. It is a substance  
in every respect in the case of a table of  
every form. As a substance it is in every  
very powerful and is especially efficacious in  
the form of substance. It is a substance  
which is with the most important nature of the  
table. The first which I have written in the  
previous dissertation. The rest of the part  
is also and is generally known by the fact  
to be which I have in substance myself with the  
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ability. The dose of the decoction in milk is a tablespoonful.

The indigenous article most employed and which is preferable to the rest when more astringency is desired, is the root of the black berry or dew-berry. A wineglass full of the strong decoction of the root may be given every two or three hours. These articles are best suited to diarrhoea occurring in extreme old age.

To the preceding remedies, I will add one which I consider worthy of attention. I mean the wild indigo, known to botanists by the name of *Baptisia tinctoria*. It may be given in powder, decoction, or tincture. The dose of the powder is from a scruple to half a drachm. In a case of diarrhoea that came under my care during the last summer I gave the tincture in the dose of ʒj every two hours; and in three days the patient was perfectly well, & has remained well ever since. This patient had been labouring under the disease for two weeks previously to taking this medicine during which time he had taken the chalk mixtures without effect. My friend Mr. Weems who intends to write on this plant has given it in several cases of the disease and with success.

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The mineral acids are important articles, especially in old and protracted cases of diarrhoea. It is worthy of remark that while the vegetable acids uniformly aggravate the complaints of the alimentary canal, the mineral acids have an effect directly opposite. The Sulphuric and nitric acids are most employed, and of these two the nitric is generally preferred.

Little, however will any course of medicine avail, in diarrhoea unless we direct an appropriate diet. This ought to consist of light and digestible food; such as boiled rice with milk, sago, arrow root; and the lighter sorts of meats roasted, as lamb, chicken &c. Weak brandy and water would not be injurious as a drink. Many cases of diarrhoea and especially those of long standing originate in Dyspepsia and are kept up by a vitiated state of the stomach. I have rarely met with a case of this disease in which the stomach was not more or less affected. All the rules of diet which are applicable to the treatment of Dyspepsia, are here to be strictly enforced. And when gastric symptoms are particularly marked it will be proper to use also the medicines required in

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Dyspepsia especially the preparations of iron  
The vegetable bitters also, as Columbo, Simarou-  
ba, quassia &c, are all beneficial in cases of  
Diarrhoea connected with Dyspepsia. By  
addressing our remedies to the stomach and  
calling into our aid the whole treatment of  
indigestion we will often find the most ob-  
stinate cases give way.

It is necessary that an equable tempera-  
ture on the surface should be preserved; and  
the best means of accomplishing this is the  
flannel roller. This is particularly described by  
Dewar. He first speaks of the utility of keeping  
up a natural degree of warmth on the surface  
in all the bowel affections particularly in dysen-  
tery; and proceeds as follows: "four or five folds of  
flannel very fine, or a large piece of fleecy hosi-  
ery is to be placed on the abdomen, and over this  
a flannel bandage is to be passed rather tightly  
and in a uniform manner from the groin to the  
arm pit, and brought back again. This mode  
of confining a certain degree of heat over that  
part of the body which is the seat of the disease  
should be persevered in by the patient as long  
as the complaint continues. When the bandage

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is early resorted it seldom fails to effect a cure. In whatever stage employed, it produces a very speedy amelioration of the symptoms. It acts on the same principle with the warm bath, which is one of the best remedies in inflammatory dysentery; it possesses all the virtues, and is free from its inconvenience. The bath unless regulated by the thermometer is apt to be too warm and to produce a perspiration so profuse as to be succeeded by an alarming debility; and as it cools, it demands frequent additions of warmth which breaks the uniformity of its temperature. Nor can the bath be used so long as the disease requires. But by wearing flannel in the manner described the patient always bears about him a bath invariable in its temperature, which never weakens by perspiration, does not interrupt him in eating, sleeping or his amusements, and renders it no longer necessary for him not to expose himself to cold. The immediate effects are first to remove the local torpor of the abdomen under which dysenteric patients are apt to labour. Before the application of flannel they feel as if they had no bowels; but when it is applied you restore over the whole abdomen the sensibility before

is easily accepted it seldom fails to effect a cure.  
In whatever stage employed, it produces a very  
speedy alleviation of the symptoms. It acts on  
the same principle with the same in fact, and  
one of the best remedies - is inflammation by  
itself; it helps, not the water and is free from  
it. In consequence, the body itself regulates by  
the blood is apt to be too much, and  
there is a disposition to produce as to be known  
of an alarming result, and it is not to be  
taken for granted without further notice.  
Under the necessity of its treatment, the  
back be used to keep in the same position.  
but by increasing pressure in the same way  
which the patient always bears about him a  
little uncomfortable in its position, which never  
makes any disposition, and not without him  
in action, sleeping in his movements, and  
as it is no longer necessary for him not to  
himself to call. The immediate effect is first to  
remove the local force of the disease under  
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wanting: Secondly it obviates the tormina and tenesmus. The torpor of the bowels is interrupted only by occasional pain which seems to leave them worse than before. The flannel bandage prevents the occurrence of this pain. Third, it removes dejection and languor: the patient's mind is invigorated and better fitted for the emergencies of life. Fourth; it corrects the difficulty of breathing which accompanies the debility arising from dysentery. If the bandage is drawn too tight it produces a different kind of dyspnoea and should be loosened, &c. &c.

Then highly is the flannel bandage recommended in inflammatory dysentery. I have little experience with it in that disease. It is highly recommended by Professor Chapman as one of the most important remedies in the management of Diarrhoea.

In the treatment of Diarrhoea arising from debility regular exercise should not be overlooked. Taken in any way, it is beneficial, but more so on horseback than any other; and especially if the patient be sent on a long journey. Even if all these remedies fail we should not surrender up our patient to



despair: much may be expected from the use of mercury. This article is of undoubted utility when the Diarrhoea is connected with a disease of any of the chylipoietic viscera: even when this is not the case it proves serviceable by instituting a set of new actions. In this way we may often succeed in curing a diarrhoea which has resisted all other remedies.

When every thing else has failed we should recommend to our patient as a dernier resort to take a voyage by sea to some temperate climate. This is an important means of cure and will sometimes succeed when all other remedies have been tried in vain.

As regards Symptomatic Diarrhoea.. which constitutes the second division of the subject, I will not go into any minute details. It is to be managed on those principles and by those remedies which I have already mentioned in treating of the history and cure of idiopathic diarrhoea. But we should constantly bear in mind that discharges of this kind are often critical and highly salutary, and should not be checked by artificial interposition. Diarrhoea

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often occurs at the crisis of acute fevers; is occasionally caused by gout, and also attends during the process of Puerperium: In these cases we should always suffer it to go on unless it become so profuse as to cause debility.

After seeing at the crisis of acute fever, it  
occasionally comes by itself and then a shock  
during the progress of the fever. In these cases  
the shock always appears to go on until  
it becomes so frequent as to cause debility.

Revised March 18 81  
H. J. H.

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